

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**INDEPENDENT SCIENCE PANEL**  
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July 12, 2000

Dr. Robin Waples  
Northwest Fisheries Science Center  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
2725 Montlake Boulevard East  
Seattle, WA 98112

Dear Dr. Waples:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your April 4, 2000 draft *Recovery Planning Guidance for Technical Recovery Teams*.

In 1998, the Washington Legislature created the Independent Science Panel (ISP) to provide scientific review and oversight of the State's salmonid recovery efforts. In our previous comments to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (November 10, 1999 memo) and our May 2000 review of the 1999 "Statewide Strategy to Recover Salmon", we suggested that for an approach to salmonid recovery to be scientifically credible, it would need to be consistent with the following four steps:

1. The distribution, abundance, and productivity of sub-populations or stocks needed to exceed the viability threshold and to sustain harvest must be specified.
2. What is possible at each site, watershed, or region to halt disruption that is deleterious for salmonids must be identified.
3. Conceptual and quantitative models need to be used to identify and avoid trivial pursuits, compare the outcome of alternative scenarios, examine uncertainty and statistical confidence.
4. A rigorous monitoring program is needed to ensure completion of implementation goals, to ensure effectiveness, to verify accuracy of projected benefits, and to provide feedback for adaptive management.

In our opinion, the guidance your document provides to the Technical Recovery Teams (TRTs) is consistent with these steps and should lead to increased use of scientific information in decision-making. We believe the guidance document provides a positive approach. We will continue to encourage the State, Legislature, and others who are responsible for salmonid recovery planning in Washington to help facilitate the implementation of approaches consistent with the above four steps.

Recognizing that the guidance document provides the TRTs and the public with an outline of how science may be incorporated in federal recovery planning, we believe an area in which the document could be improved, is in explaining the role of the recently formed Recovery Science Review Panel. This would help public understanding of the roles of these different teams and it is also of interest to us, and probably other regional science panels, that have broad oversight roles.

Finally, we also recommend that you re-evaluate the examples and hypothetical scenarios provided in Tables 1 and 2 (and described in the text) of the draft guidance document, to make sure they are readily understandable by the target audiences.

On behalf of the ISP, thank you again for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to working with you to ensure that science is used in recovering salmon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Montgomery", with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

David Montgomery, Vice Chair  
Independent Science Panel